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# HOMEMAKERS' CHAT

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U. S. DEPARTMENT  
OF AGRICULTURE  
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SUBJECT: "Starch from Sorghum"...Information from the plant scientists of the United States Department of Agriculture.

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Have you ever wondered how bakers keep the juice of their fruit pies at a firm consistency...and still keep the pies from tasting starchy?

Before the war, it was simple. They used tapioca to stiffen the liquids. But when our imports of tapioca from the East Indies were cut off...bakers had to hunt around for something else to use. Well...there is something else. The seed from sorghum, - Cody sorghum, - produces when it's processed...a starch very much like tapioca.

The story of Cody sorghum starts back in 1935. Because it was then plant scientists, in the course of their experimentations, found several varieties of American sorghum seed containing a quality they described as "waxy".

They later found these waxy sorghums could be processed into a tapioca-like product.

Unfortunately, the waxy-seeded sorghums were better forage plants than grain bearers. The scientists faced a problem of cross-breeding. They hoped to get a grain-type sorghum with the waxy-seeded characteristics. Well...to make a long story short...the experiment was a success. Some of the selections from the cross yielded a grain that could be processed for the starch.

So when our tapioca imports were cut, one of the sorghum selections produced cooperatively by the United States Department of Agriculture plant scientists and the Kansas experiment station was used. The new variety was named "Cody".

Four years ago, there were only 20 pounds of Cody seed. Last year, 32 million pounds could be spared for processing.

The starch from these Cody sorghum seeds is not only being used in commercial pie-making. It's also being used by the food industry to fill a number of other gaps left by the short supplies of tapioca.

